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CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approve the Bridge to 2023 Priorities Plan

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office

SUBMITTED BY: Marcie Schatz, Deputy City Manager; Pam Gallahue, Community Services Director; and Linda LaCloche, Communications Director

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

In December 2019, the City issued RFP 20-012, Strategic Planning Consultant Services, to contract with an experienced and qualified consulting firm to guide the City Council, DLT, community members, and other stakeholders in the execution of a comprehensive visioning process, facilitation of community engagement exercises, and development of an updated strategic plan.

In February 2020, after review and scoring of proposals, the selection committee invited the top four vendors, and ultimately recommended Shockey Consulting for award.

The original goal was to begin the community engagement process in the spring of 2020. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City halted all in-person activities.

In December 2020, the City Council awarded Shockey Consulting ("Shockey") the contract and work officially began in January 2021 with the discovery and community engagement phases. Once the new Council was in place, Shockey facilitated planning sessions with directors and councilmembers.

The project, Bridging the Past to Possibility, included an online community survey and targeted

engagement activities in the areas of inclusion and belonging, sustainability, and public art/special events. Data from these components (currently shown on the City's website) were distilled to develop a list of citizen priorities for City services, a draft vision, and a list of goals for Council consideration at a June workshop.

Through discussions and small group activities at the workshop, the following six areas were determined to be the highest priorities for the City.

1. Financial Stability and Economy
2. Housing Choice
3. Infrastructure and Utilities
4. Public Safety
5. Sustainability

Next steps were to include two consultant-led community meetings as well as a second, and final, City Council workshop in August.

Given the input received through the process, the number of initiatives currently underway that align with the priority areas, and the challenges of having community meetings during the re-emergence of COVID-19 protocols, staff made the decision to cancel the community meetings as well as the workshop and evaluate the best path forward for the project.

Staff, in partnership with Shockey, met several times and concluded that the community input received from survey components, as well as City Council recommendations from the June workshop, provides adequate direction to build a document that outlines priorities to 2023.

As such, the Bridge to 2023 Priorities Plan, outlined in the Discussion section below, reflects community and City Council input as well as the consolidation of initiatives that align with the priority categories.

Specifically, the Financial Principles, since their creation, have provided policy direction and will continue to guide decisions into the future. The Housing Choice goals were approved in January 2021 after years of study and consideration by the Housing Advisory Commission and community. The Sustainability goals reflect the outcomes of the August 31 Sustainability Workshop. Infrastructure and Utility goals reflect the plans and strategies contained within the current Water and Electric Utility rate studies.

The use of a statistically valid citizen survey has been a valuable tool for community feedback on City services in Naperville since 2006. Staff is recommending that a citizen survey be programmed for 2023.

DISCUSSION:

Initiatives and goals of the Bridge to 2023 Priorities Plan are outlined below:

Financial Stability and Economy

- Financial Principles
 - Principle #1 - The City will pass a structurally balanced operating budget annually.
 - Principle #2 - The City commits to continuous improvement in the delivery of necessary and cost-effective services.

- Principle #3 - The City will actively seek to increase its reserves to 25% and reduces its debt by 25% in the next eight years.
- Maintain flexibility while seeking redevelopment options in order to fully utilize Naperville's developed commercial properties.

Housing Choice

- Develop plan for Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing.
- Establish a revolving rehabilitation loan program targeted towards low-income seniors.
- Consider options for a voluntary inclusionary zoning ordinance.
- Leverage publicly owned land to address housing choice.

Infrastructure and Utilities

- Strategically invest in the City's aged infrastructure to help facilitate business retention and expansion.
- Develop and implement a water utility capital plan that maintains the City's high service levels while ensuring regulatory compliance with all IEPA & EPA mandates.
- Develop and implement programs that will improve electric utility load factor and reduce system peaks

Public Safety

- Fire Department
 - Promote and foster community risk reduction
 - Continue the investment in Fire training, education and succession planning
 - Explore new ways of service delivery while adapting to changing community needs
- Police Department
 - Increase public support and trust in the Police
 - Continue the investment in Police training, education and succession planning
 - Implement technological enhancements

Sustainability

- Implement a Green Purchasing Program.
- Determine appropriate metrics and reimplement publishing the City of Naperville Sustainability Report on a biannual basis.
- Revise permit applications to capture waste/recycling data and sustainability efforts.
- Collaborate with community partners to create a Sustainability Outreach and Engagement Program.

Next Steps

Upon approval, staff will post the Bridge to 2023 Plan on the City's website and include in other communication materials as appropriate. Staff will also meet to develop a cadence and method to deliver status updates.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding for 2022 initiatives are included in the proposed 2022 operating and capital budgets. Any funding for future initiatives will be presented during the annual budget process and require City Council approval. Where appropriate, staff will also seek grant funding.